

HIS GREAT STORY CONTINUED IN TO-MORROW'S EVENING JOURNAL.

THE MIRACLE
AT
MARKHAMHow TWELVE
CHURCHES
BECAME ONEBy CHAS. M. SHELDON
AUTHOR OF
"IN HIS STEPS"

Continued from Yesterday's Evening Journal.

SYNOPSIS OF FIRST AND SECOND INSTALLMENTS.

The Rev. John Procter, the son of a minister, pastor of the Congregational Church at Markham, receives a letter from William Procter, his son who is studying for the ministry at Andover, Mass. The letter contains the startling announcement that the son has decided to abandon his preparations for the ministry. The reason he gives is that the churches are arrayed against each other in foolish denominational pride, instead of united to fight sin. He sees little or no opportunity to serve the world.

John Procter, though deeply grieved, realizes the truth of his son's statement. He counts the different churches in Markham—twelve.

Could they ever be made one? he asks himself, and he resolves to devote his life to this great purpose.

Jane Procter is like her brother in distaste for the ministry. She loves Francis Randall, the son of Dean Randall, of the Episcopal Church, at Markham.

John Procter was at the station to meet him when the train came in.

During the two days that followed, John Procter and his son had some very earnest talks together. There had been a secret hope in the father's mind that his son might reconsider his determination to go out of the ministry forever.

"You can preach from the pulpit of your mill out there," he suggested.

William knew what he meant. He replied as he shook hands very hard, "Yes, father, I haven't lost my faith in Christ as Master. If I have lost faith in the church as my workman."

The same evening he had had the last talk with his father, William was in his study up stairs packing his trunk, putting into it carefully some things that his mother and Jane had made for him.

Jane came in bringing some things as William knelt by the open trunk. He was just putting into one of the pockets of the trunk a package of letters and photographs.

"Want to see some of my secondary classmates?" he asked, as he handed her the case of pictures.

Jane sat down on the floor by the trunk and began to take out the pictures.

William continued his packing.

"Do the lot girls study for the ministry at Andover?" Jane asked.

"What's that?"

"Is that one of your classmates at Andover?" Jane asked, as she turned the face of an attractive looking young woman towards William.

"Give me that!" cried William with a rudeness so unusual for his gentle spirit that Jane was hurt by it.

She handed him the photograph and rose to leave the room, but was recalled by a new tone of voice from William.

"Don't go, Jane, I'm upset. I thought I had lost the picture. Come back. I want to tell you something."

Jane's curiosity was stronger than her

momentary feeling, and she came back at once and sat down by the trunk again.

"That is the face of the girl I love!" said William, gravely.

"I don't see anything dreadful about it. Will she look like a very nice girl?"

"Will she be?" he turned to the trunk again.

"Tell me, Will," said Jane, putting an arm around his neck as she sat by him.

"There isn't much to tell," said William in a muffled voice, as he threw a book into the trunk.

"We were engaged, and when I changed views about going on with the ministry she—well, she talked it over and agreed it would be wiser to break the engagement. She said she could not marry me if I was not going to be a minister."

"How funny that is!" exclaimed Jane, suddenly.

"I don't see anything funny about it," said William, as he gloomily, as he turned away from his sister.

"Oh, but it is," replied Jane. "Because, Will—I you see—this girl won't marry you unless you are a minister, and I want that is—I have made up my mind never to marry any one who is a minister. If we could only straighten things out. They seem so mixed, somehow."

William did not answer.

Finally Jane stole a little closer and laid her cheek against his, and then William knew that she was crying, because her cheek was wet.

"Dear me!" he cried in some bewilderment, "see you, have you been disappointed in love, too, Jane?" he asked, forgetting, for a moment, his own experience.

"No," said Jane, crying a little harder. "I am not disappointed. That isn't the word. But she would not tell William anything more, and after finding out that the Andover girl was a daughter of one of the professors and also a teacher in the public schools, like herself, she went out and left William to himself."

"Girls are so queer," he said, as he finished his packing.

The photograph did not go back into the trunk, but into an inside pocket, and out into that rare mining camp with its strange experiences, William Procter, once theodorian, but now a student superintendent in the Gloucester Mill, carried a sore heart, as well as a disturbed religious spirit.

He had been in Pyramid two weeks, and was beginning to get acquainted with his new strange duties in the mill, when one evening he had a call from Francis Randall.

As he stood in the door Randall came up, and before he had time to draw back into the vest room the clergyman had put out a hand, saying very heartily as he did so:

"Glad to see you, Procter. I heard from one of the Andover professors, a friend of fathers, that you were here."

The two young men stood talking a few minutes by the door, and then Randall started on.

"I'll be very glad if you'll come and see me," said Randall. "I'm stopping for the present with Mr. Clark, the Congregational minister. I have a room there, if you want any books at any time, my library is at your disposal."

"Thank you," said William. He did not say that he would come, and Francis did not appear to notice it.

When Sunday came he went, with some curiosity, to hear Randall preach. Some interesting things came of that curiosity which belong to the history of Markham.

Meanwhile Dean Randall was unable to throw off the impression made by his son's letter. In spite of his attempt to forget it, the struggle in his mind grew. It finally narrowed down to the plain question of his personal ambition for the Bishopric and the opportunity to use his church for the growth of Christianity. His own ambition and the cause of Christ were finally in open and unmistakable conflict.

At the end of three weeks after the reception of his son's letter the Dean's conflict had reached a crisis. How great that crisis was not even he knew. But he was soon to have the clearest and severest test made of his church life. That test was caused by a natural event.

The Dean was in his study Friday night. It was late, but he kept on writing.

Toward midnight the Dean went to his window and looked out. He had been standing there several minutes when he noticed an unusual light in the Congregational Church.

John Procter had a study room in the church, but he seldom used it at night. The Dean stood watching the gleam through the windows of the vestry.

It grew stronger.

Suddenly a sharp tongue of flame shot through the window over one of the doors, and the Dean knew at once what the light was.

He rushed into the other room and called out to his wife:

"The Congregational Church is on fire!"

By the time he had reached the church flames were leaping out of the little windows above the bell in the steeple.

Almost the entire town turned out. With the help of the Fire Department they saved the parsonage, but the church was completely destroyed.

The people drew back in awe as the gleam fell upon the roof, blown by the gale which seemed to drive the tall, blazing torch through the air like a giant spear down through the timbers.

John Procter and his wife and Jane stood in the parsonage yard looking at the smoldering heap.

The Dean came up. He had been working hard with scores of other men carrying John Procter's books out when it looked as if the parsonage must go with the church. He had also helped to carry them back again when the danger was over. Several times during the excitement he had noticed Mr. Harris, the Baptist minister, hand at work.

"Well," John Procter was saying to one of his parishioners, "this is one less church building in Markham."

"Very sorry for your neighbor," said the Dean. He was blackened and a little burned. His coat was torn across the back and his whole appearance was very unministerial.

"Very kind of you, Dean Randall," said John Procter, shaking hands with him heartily. "I can't say that I would like to do the same thing for you, some time, but I certainly owe you much and appreciate your kindness."

"You want have any place to preach next Sunday," said Mr. Harris before the Dean could reply. "I shall be glad to offer your people the use of the Baptist Church in the morning."

John Procter was undoubtedly astonished. He said to himself, "I have done Harris an injustice. Aloud he said:

"Thank you heartily, Harris. I accept your offer for my people with pleasure."

The Dean hesitated. No one there in that disheveled group of people standing about the ruins of that church building had any idea that one of their number was having a battle with himself beside which the recent fight with the fire was insignificant.

It was on the lips of the Dean to say, "We shall be glad to give your people the use of the Cathedral in the evening, neighbor."

But he checked himself with the thought of the astonishment that would come into all those people's faces at such an invitation.

He had taken a step toward John Procter. He now stepped back, and after another strange hesitation he walked away.

CHAPTER V.

Copyright, 1899, by Frederick L. Chapman. The Power of Christian Community.

It was Sunday morning in Markham, after the burning of the Congregational Church. John Procter was in his study reading over the sermon which he expected to preach in the Baptist Church.

It was nearly half past ten o'clock, and he was about to come out of the study and call his wife and daughter, when Jane knocked at the door, and when he opened it handed him a note.

"The servant brought it over just now from the Dean," she said. "She is waiting for an answer."

John Procter was surprised.

The Dean had never written him a letter, and he had no possible hint as to what the note contained. It was therefore in the greatest astonishment that John Procter read the following:

"My Dear Brother and Neighbor: I understand that Brother Cameron, of the Presbyterian Church, has invited you to speak from his pulpit this evening, but if it does not seem to you to come too late to be hearty, will you accept my invitation to occupy the pulpit of Grace Cathedral next Sunday morning?"

"If you will reply by a word and sent it over by the servant, I will announce to my people at my service this morning, and Brother Harris can do the same from his pulpit."

"Mrs. Randall joins me in sympathy with you for your loss, and congratulates you for your recovery."

It grew stronger.

Mrs. Procter and yourself on the saving of your parsonage. In Christ's name, your brother and neighbor.

"Nathan Randall."

If the Dean had come into his study and fired a gun at him, John Procter could hardly have been more astonished than he was by the receipt of this note.

The Dean had actually invited him to preach in the Episcopal Church. It was as unheard-of thing.

"Are you ready, John? It is time to go," said Mrs. Procter.

"Read that," said John Procter, handing the Dean's note to her.

"Why, he has actually invited you to preach in the Grace Cathedral!" exclaimed Mrs. Procter.

John Procter stepped back into his study and wrote his reply.

"My Dear Brother—I am glad to accept your invitation to preach next Sunday morning in Grace Cathedral."

It accept it in the same spirit of Christian fellowship which prompts you to make it. We thank you for your sympathy, and pray for great blessings on you and your people to-day.

To the Very Rev. Dean Randall, Grace Cathedral.

Your neighbor,
JOHN PROCTER.

He sent his note over to the Manse by the servant, and with Mrs. Procter and Jane started for the Baptist church.

the servant, and with Mrs. Procter and Jane started for the Baptist church.

"Were you ever more surprised in your life?" asked Mrs. Procter as they walked along.

"No, I don't know as I ever was," said John Procter gravely.

"Mrs. Randall told me that Francis—that her son out in Pyramid, had lately invited the Congregational minister there to preach in his pulpit," said Jane, giving out some of the confidence Mrs. Randall had shared with her that day when she had run over to the Manse.

"The father is following his son's example in this case," said Mrs. Procter with a slight smile.

The people of Markham who were present at the Baptist church that morning will never forget the service. It made an impression on them that they felt for years.

The church was filled to overflowing.

The first distinct surprise to the congregation came when the Baptist minister gave out the notices.

He read all the notices relating to his own church, including the preaching of John Procter in the Presbyterian Church in the evening, and then after a little pause he said:

"I have also to announce, especially for the benefit of our friends from the Congregational Church, who are with us to-day that the Rev. Dean Randall, of the

day that their pastor, by invitation from Dean Randall will preach in Grace Cathedral next Sunday morning."

A distinct shock went over the people. They turned and looked questioningly at one another.

Never in all the Church history of Markham had such a surprising notice been given out from a pulpit.

The second marked feature of the service was John Procter's sermon.

He stood a moment looking over the pulpit to the people, and then began slowly to talk about the event of the fire which had destroyed his church.

John Procter went on with a natural continuation of his personal remarks about the helpfulness shown on the night of the fire, to speak in general about the power which an entire Christian community might have if it would unite as one to save the whole town from the common danger of sin as it had united to save one family in the case of the burning church, because their danger was the town's danger, as well.

"There is the fire of the saloon, for example," John Procter went on, and he had never preached better, so his own people and the Baptist people as well thought.

"There is the fire of Sabbath desecration growing more coarse and open every year."

"There is the fire of the neglected factory district, where 'thou and crime' are growing. Is not that a common danger point that we ought to be facing together? There is the fire of corrupt selfish political control of our own town."

"There is the fire of wasteful, selfish amusements which even in our comparatively small community drains the time and strength not only of the churches, but of the professing Christian population as well. If we were working together with a common purpose as disciples of one Master, do you not think we could reduce this wastefulness to a minimum and redeem the time which does not belong to us, but to the Lord who gave up all for our salvation?"

Heads nodded in assent all over the house.

"He concluded the sermon with a prayer of unusual power and beauty that the spirit of truth might lead them into all the truth and make possible, speedily, the prayer of Jesus that His disciples might be one, even as He was one with the Father."

Charles Harris and John Procter walked slowly away from the church together. They were the last to leave.

TO BE CONTINUED IN TO-MORROW'S EVENING JOURNAL.

Insomnia

Did you ever have that feeling of oppression, like a weight on your chest, or a load of cobble-stones in your stomach, keeping you awake nights with a horrible sensation of anxiety, or tossing restlessly in terrible dreams, that make the cold perspiration break out all over you? That's insomnia, or sleeplessness, and some unfortunately suffer with it night after night, until their reason is in danger and they are on the edge of going mad. The cause of this fearful ailment is in the stomach and bowels, and a Cascaret taken at night will soon bring relief and give the sufferer sweet, refreshing sleep. Always insist on getting CASCARETS!

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THIS GREAT WRITER-WORKER
LOVES CHRIST MORE THAN MONEY.

Rev. Charles M. Sheldon, Author of "The Miracle at Markham," Refused an Offer from the Journal of \$15,000 a Year to Come to New York.

Preferring to give up his life to work among the lowly, to learn the weight of their burdens and to share them, to live in a small Western city and teach its people the sublimity of Christian living, the Rev. Charles M. Sheldon, author of "The Miracle at Markham," now being published in the Evening Journal, and "In His Steps," has declined an offer of \$15,000 a year to come to this city and write for the New York Journal.

This proffer of a salary such as has been given to few ministers in the entire history of the world could not tempt Dr. Sheldon from the great work he has undertaken among the humble of Topeka and such outlying districts as he is able to visit in his ministering rounds.

Mr. Sheldon stands to-day at the fore front of Christian workers and writers. His "Miracle at Markham" is hailed as a work quite equal, if not superior, to "In His Steps," which is being translated into ten languages.

In the current Harper's Weekly there is a long account of Dr. Sheldon, which says, in part:

"Mr. Sheldon was born at Wellsville, N. Y., February 26, 1857, but his father removed to Dakota in his early years, and he was thus reared on a Dakota farm, which circumstance had much to do with the strong physique and vigorous nature of the man. He had the good fortune to be educated at Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass., at Brown University, where he took his degree in 1883, and subsequently at Andover Theological Seminary, where he was graduated in 1886."

"Mr. Sheldon went to London in 1889 to study humanity in that great city. After returning to America he took charge of his first parish, at Waterbury, Vt. Again he showed his desire to know people in order to help them. He said: 'I wanted to know my people, to become familiar with their wants, their temptations, their discouragements and their ambitions. It seemed to me that if I could see every man, woman and child in my whole parish between two Sundays, I could face them on Sunday and preach with the knowledge that I was reaching something definite. But it was a physical impossibility. The parish was seven miles square, and, being in the heart of the Green Mountains, it was all uphill. My only means of locomotion was a small horse that had quinsy, spring-bait and a lazy disposition.'"

"With a desire to know humanity he began his practical studies. He divided the city into eight groups for his convenience, namely, street-car and electric-car men, negroes, Santa Fe railroad men, Washburn College students, doctors, lawyers, business men and newspaper men. At one time he went to the college and stayed a week, playing ball with the boys on the campus, visiting classrooms and studying Greek and Latin with them. Later he rode on the engines with the firemen and engineers or spent his time in the yards and in the shops when the men were off duty. He visited the negroes in their schools and homes, and spent three weeks with them, studying their lives and habits. He went on a leading paper as a reporter, and, as he says, 'For a week I astonished the community. I have no doubt, by accounts of runaways, the arrival of John Smith in the city and the conflagration of Mr. Brown's barn last night. My greatest temptation while with the newspaper fraternity was the manufacture of history to keep up with the everlasting cry for copy.'"

A unique method of preaching is Mr. Sheldon's. It is that of reading stories of his own writing, a chapter an evening, and thus dwelling on the homely, powerful themes of life.

These are the books Mr. Sheldon has written: "Richard Bruce," "Richard Hardy's Seven Days," "The Twentieth Day," "The Crucifixion of Philip Strong," "John King's Question Class," "His Brother's Keeper," "In His Steps," "Molehill Kink," "The Redemption of Freetown," "One of the Two," "The Miracle at Markham," "For Christ and the Church."

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